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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0126
INFO RUEHAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT PRIORITY 2654
RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ASTANA PRIORITY 0230
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK PRIORITY 4282
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY 1385
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 2150
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE PRIORITY
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 7257
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU PRIORITY 8523
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 1242
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT PRIORITY 3399
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY 6536
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 2725
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY 1136
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 2571
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 002829

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PK](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: THE RED MOSQUE STRIKES AGAIN: MESSAGE PARLORS

REF: A. ISLAMABAD 2468

- [1](#)B. ISLAMABAD 2334
- [1](#)C. ISLAMABAD 2270
- [1](#)D. ISLAMABAD 1846
- [1](#)E. ISLAMABAD 1688
- [1](#)F. ISLAMABAD 1647

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Peter Bodde, reasons 1.4 (b), (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: On June 23, students from men's and women's madrassahs associated with the Red Mosque kidnapped nine individuals, including six Chinese nationals, from a local massage parlor. The hostages were released sixteen hours later. The incident has embarrassed the Interior Minister, who on June 24 began an official visit to China. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) In the middle of the night on June 23, students from the men's and women's madrassahs affiliated with the Red Mosque kidnapped nine persons, including six Chinese nationals, from a well-known Islamabad brothel fronting as a Chinese acupuncture clinic and massage parlor. The six Chinese included five women and reportedly some Pakistani customers. As during an incident in early March, when women from the madrassah kidnapped a number of prostitutes from another well known brothel, the Red Mosque claimed it acted against the brothel after neighbors complained about the facility.

[1](#)3. (C) Embassy contacts report that the weekend's activities embarrassed the Interior Minister, who departed June 24 for a five day official visit to China. The embarrassment seems to have spurred a quick resolution; the hostages were released after 16 hours -- faster than after previous incidents. At a press conference after the release, Red Mosque leader Maulana Abdul Rashid Ghazi said that the students had freed the individuals in view of the friendly ties between Pakistan and China and because of government assurances that all brothels would be shut down. Maulana Ghazi warned the local administration that the Red Mosque could take similar action

against other massage centers being used as brothels.

4.(C) COMMENT: Most Muslim leaders in Pakistan continue to publicly deplore the Red Mosque's actions. Nevertheless, the lack of police action against brothels, even after neighbors complain vociferously, leaves a vacuum into which some religious extremists are prone to walk.

PATTERSON